

EMPLOYER MEETINGS COMING TO YOUR AREA

Spring is coming, and that means it's once again time for PERSI's annual employer meetings. The 2006 meetings will be structured the same as last year with general employers meeting in the morning and school districts meeting in the afternoon. The meetings are slated to begin in April and run through the first week of June.

PERSI Answer Center Manager Judy Aitken, Choice Plan Manager Diane Berg, and Employer Service Center Manager Debbie Buck will facilitate the meetings, answer questions, and provide follow-up on "parking lot" issues after the last meeting has been held.

The agenda currently includes transmittals, the Choice Plan, legislative updates, the reorganization underway at PERSI and how it affects employers, and the new rates for the unused sick leave program for school employers.

To help ensure the effectiveness of the employer meetings, PERSI will be conducting a one-day employer focus group in early March to identify areas of concern and/or topics of interest before the meeting agenda is finalized. Naturally not every employer can take part in the focus group, but *all* employers are invited to submit questions, topics, or concerns to Debbie Buck at 1-866-887-9525 for inclusion at this year's meetings.

Based on participation last year, PERSI expects a good turnout this year. The meetings are a great opportunity for employers to exchange information and to learn about one another's experiences, which is especially important for new PERSI employers. Judy, Diane, and Debbie are excited about meeting with and getting to know employers and to sharing useful information designed to answer questions, explain processes, and familiarize employers with the changes taking place at PERSI.

2006 Meeting Schedule

General Employers:
9:00 a.m - Noon

School Districts :
1:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Refreshment Breaks

*Mark your calendar
so you don't miss the
meeting in your area.*

Date	City	Place
April 18	Boise	Statehouse Inn 981 Grove St.
April 19	Nampa	Nampa Civic Center 311 3 rd St.
May 2	Sandpoint	La Quinta Inn 415 Cedar St.
May 3	Coeur d'Alene	AmeriTel 333 Ironwood Ave.
May 4	Lewiston	Lewis and Clark State College Selwa & Lochsa River Rooms
May 17	Idaho Falls	AmeriTel 645 Lindsay Blvd.
May 18	Pocatello	AmeriTel 1440 Bench Rd.
May 19	Twin Falls	AmeriTel 1377 Blue Lakes Blvd. N.
June 6	Grangeville	Super 8 801 SW 1 st St.
June 7	McCall	The Hunt Lodge, Holiday Inn Express 210 North 3 rd St.

PERSI REORGANIZATION CONTINUES SMOOTHLY

In past newsletters you read about the reorganization taking place at PERSI. The multi-phased project kicked off nearly 2 years ago, and will continue to move forward over the next 18 months. The most recent phases of the reorganization to be completed have been the PERSI Answer Center (PAC) and the PERSI Processing Center (PPC).

What is the PAC?

In an effort to improve its customer service without compromising the “personal touch” for which it is known, PERSI created a contact center with the goal of answering questions and responding to inquiries without transferring or passing callers around, and without asking members to call back. The PAC, which became operational in September 2005, has seven staff dedicated to phone duties and six retirement counselors available throughout the state to meet with members.

PERSI committed considerable resources and effort to give the PAC staff the training necessary to ensure success, knowing there would be a return on investment through a better educated staff and more satisfied members. Training modules specifically designed for PAC staff included comprehensive coverage of retirement benefits, sick leave, separations, and divorce, disability, and death issues.

Almost immediately, the PAC staff was bombarded with Medicare Part D questions. Thanks to training and educational materials provided by the Senior Health Insurance Benefit Advisors (SHIBA) program and other agencies involved with Medicare, the staff was able to field questions and redirect callers to the appropriate sources for accurate and up-to-date information.

By establishing a centralized contact center staffed with generalists, PERSI can respond to members more quickly.

What is the PPC?

The PPC is where member-related paperwork is completed. PERSI formed a center dedicated to providing consistent and accurate forms, applications, and information request processing not otherwise completed by the PAC. As part of the

PPC effort, PERSI has identified workflow solutions for several critical, high-volume business processes including retirement application processing, service credit determinations, and the review of disability, divorce, and separation paperwork. By integrating technical solutions – including digital imaging and automated workflow – with new business processes, PERSI expects to reduce operating costs, improve overall efficiency, and enhance customer service.

As part of this new way of doing business, the PPC staff has been cross training in each area to ensure they can provide quality service to any member on any issue.

Employers can learn more about the changes taking place at PERSI by attending the upcoming Employer Meetings.

Notes

PERSI legal counsel [Brad Goodsell](#) was appointed Co-chair of the Benefits Section of the National Association of Public Pension Attorneys, a professional organization providing continuing legal education services to public retirement plans. He was also elected to the Board of Directors of the local chapter of the National Institute of Pension Administrators, a national association representing the retirement and employee benefit plan administration profession.

Coeur d'Alene Customer Service Rep. [Kathi Kaufman's](#) son just returned home from his second tour of military duty in Iraq. Besides the daily tragedies associated with war, her son had one very close call when the Black Hawk helicopter he was supposed to be on went down in bad weather killing all on board. PERSI salutes Army Specialist Michael Kaufman for his service to our country.

PAC Manager [Judy Aitken's](#) son just completed 22 weeks at the Las Vegas police academy. Police Officer Eric Aitken is now serving the community of Henderson, NV. Congratulations.